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## THE RELATION OF HISTORY AND INDUSTRY.

ONE of the greatest difficulties which confront social and educational workers at the present time is the prevalence of the habit of dealing with the problems of life in an isolated way. Problems have been broken up, and the fragments have been relegated to those whose experience and training have given them no appreciation of the situation from which the real problems emerged or the direction toward which they tend. The real function of man's work in nearly every department of life has been obscured by the complexity of the machinery devised for carrying it on. The machinery of the school, of the church, of the state, as well as the machinery of the industrial world, has become an end in itself. It is no longer regarded as an instrument for social service.

The overcrowded curriculum, the isolation of interests, and the general confusion which pervades our educational system are merely a reflection of the condition in the larger world. This condition, however, is merely a transitional stage, and should be recognized as such. The school has a real function to perform, and the educational machinery, sooner or later, will be so directed as to fulfil this function.

It is because the period of education is the period of leisure, the period when the individual is removed from the storm and stress of life, that it is the period for gaining a higher vantage point from which society as a whole can proceed. It behooves educators, therefore, to recognize this situation and to deal with it in the light of our highest truths. It behooves educators to recognize relations which actually exist and to utilize them; not waste their energies in unrelated efforts, or in attempting to force relations which have no basis in fact.

The most significant steps in the establishment of industry were made ages before the dawn of the historic period. These early achievements have the same relation to those of later times that the foundation of a building has to the structure built upon it. They have acted as the determining influence in the formation

of our instincts and impulses, on the one hand, and in the formation of our social institutions, on the other. The history of the race, in its early stages of development, is the history of these achievements. The complex societies of later periods, however, do not lend themselves so readily to such a comprehensive treatment. The general history of such periods is often presented as merely formulated statements of the political, the industrial, the social, and the ecclesiastical history of the period, with little reference to their interdependence. Such abstractions as these, though they may form a part of history, do not constitute real history. History is life, history is activity, before it is a record of life and activity. Besides, history is a record of life and activity before it is an abstraction of this record. To present the bare abstraction in the name of history is to substitute a stone for bread. To ask the child to transform the stone into bread would be absurd. Suitable materials must be made available before we can expect the child to use them. The study of bare records of life is without profit. The study of fragmentary records is even more fruitless. To function normally in the life of the child, history must become a part of life, a part of the child's experience. This function can never be realized from the mere study of books. The makers of history have been those who have acquired a rich experience and who have been sensitive to the needs of the times. The incorporation of this experience as a part of one's own implies that the child be given the opportunity to acquire a rich experience, that this individual experience be enriched by kindred experiences of the race, and that a training be provided which will cultivate a sensitiveness to social needs.

It is as absurd to attempt to explain the history of a people by its industries alone as it is to ignore them as an essential factor in such an explanation. Just as individuals are moved by different motives, now one and now another becoming dominant, so societies are moved. The activities which correspond to these motives weave themselves into the tangled web of life, now one and now another forming the dominant pattern. It is because industry is an activity corresponding to an ever-pressing need that it is always present, and that it usually plays the leading part.

History is not industry, it is not science, it is not art, it is not politics, it is not religion, it is not education; it is all these in one. In the study of simple societies the interplay of all these forces can readily be perceived. In the study of complex societies the task is more difficult; but, no doubt, many of the difficulties which now obstruct the way will be removed. The history of a period should reveal the play of the most dominant forces operating in society. It should reveal the essential elements in the situation, throwing emphasis where it naturally belongs. In this way no particular interest can possibly usurp the entire field.

If we trace the development of those instincts in mankind which are at the root of our industrial development, we shall find that they are the same instincts which have built up our social institutions. The instinct which led man to exploit his environment for food, and other materials required in the satisfaction of his daily needs, prompted him to explore wider and wider areas, until he laid tribute to the resources of the whole world. The historical explorations and migrations of modern times depend as surely, though less directly, upon industrial activity as did the wanderings of primitive clans in search of new hunting grounds, or fresh pastures for their herds and flocks.

The instinct, which man first exercised in the transformation of raw materials which he consumed, under the stimulus of personal need and social approval developed into the true workmanship instinct. This instinct, though overlaid by artificial habits, is still powerful, and finds expression in the planting of colonies and in the development of the industries upon which the success of a people depends. To be sure, the industrial motive in colonization is frequently colored by other desires; but a close examination of the real situation reveals the fact that in no case can the industrial motive be disregarded. Mr. Weeden, in his *Economic History of New England*, states that, notwithstanding the alleged motive of individual liberty of conscience, the majority of the Pilgrims "left home and braved terrors of sea and wilderness to better their condition economically and socially."

The instinct which led man to give and to receive presents, to barter the products of his labor for other products, gave impulse

to those activities which have developed into the commerce of the world. The army and navy have been developed chiefly to extend and protect commercial rights. Captain Alfred T. Mahan, in his book entitled *The Influence of the Sea Power upon History*, states that the key to much of the history, as well as of the policy, of nations bordering upon the sea is to be found in these three things: production, with the necessity of exchanging products; shipping, whereby the exchange is carried on; and colonies, which facilitate and enlarge the operations of shipping and tend to protect it by multiplying points of safety (Vol. I, p. 28).

The social instinct, which has ever prompted man to foster those industries which promote the life of the community, operates to unite men and to secure the advantages which come through co-operative action. Such united effort was first secured with reference to industrial activities through the influence of the dance. Gradually co-operative effort has been applied to new fields and has been fostered by other agencies. It would seem that in recent times the development of the social consciousness and the means for securing effective co-operation have not kept pace with the advance in technical appliances. Social industries, developed in obedience to instinctive needs and social approval, constitute the main streams of progress—the main features in the history of mankind.

The emphasis placed upon political history in the school is an illustration of the fact that we have become lost in the machinery of the process. The *machinery of government* appears to be of greater importance than the *people* who are governed. A fragment of experience is thus made to stand for the complete situation. When a complete view of the essential factors operating in a given period are known, when the differentiating interests of the child make a demand for a corresponding differentiation in subject-matter, the study of a particular phase of history is a natural procedure. But until a complete view of the situation is secured, until the interests become differentiated, it is folly to waste energy upon mere fragments. By its very nature, political history, divorced from the industrial questions in which it is rooted, is a mere “fairly tale.” Though intended to develop patriotism, it is more likely to foster superstition, thus blocking

the way to a real understanding of social conditions and forces. It is such teaching that augments the numbers which form an easy prey to the self-seeking politician.

The original dependence of government upon industry, and the interdependence of the two in later times, are everywhere evident to the student who penetrates beneath the surface of the statements formulated in historical works. The form of government evolved by the primitive clan was the form best adapted to meet the needs of people living under the conditions which determined their life. The size of the clan, the division of labor between the sexes, the spirit of co-operation within the group and the feeling of hostility toward all outside it, the willingness to follow a leader in time of danger, and the reluctance to do so at any other time—all these characteristics were determined in large measure by the reactionary effect of the industries of the people upon their mode of life.

The effect of the industrial system upon the political system is clearly shown in the development of industries which require co-operative action. The conquest of wild beasts, the utilization of the food-supplies in the deep seas, the domestication and care of animals together with the protection of the same against the raids of wild beasts and neighboring peoples, the clearing of the soil and the care of crops—all these are so many steps in the organization of community life. The steps in the evolution of industrial systems thus have a significance in relation, not merely to government, but to life as a whole. Each step marks a *revolution* in the political and social, as well as in the industrial, system. Each step introduces new factors, which result in the reorganization of the old factors so as to take account of their relations to the new. Abundant illustrations of this truth are to be found in historic times. The rise of the ancient city-state was the counterpart of the development of systematic agriculture in the river valleys. The draining of the marshes, the clearing of the primeval forests, the development of systems of irrigation, were too complex and arduous undertakings to be carried on effectively without the support and direction of a political structure of considerable stability. The city-state was a response to this need, and while, from one point of view, it was essentially a

community organized with reference to consumption, it made good its claim to the products it consumed by furnishing the stability, the control, and the means of protection which were necessary at that time. With reference to industry, the city-state was a transition from the house industries to the handicrafts; with reference to political control, it was a transition from the gentile system of government based upon kinship to the political system based upon territory; and with reference to the progress of civilization as a whole, it was the transition from barbarism to civilization.

Different phases of social progress are not isolated, but vitally related. When removed from their natural setting, they lose much of their real significance. Presented in such a light, the history of the city-state—or, indeed, that of any other period—cannot tell one-half of its part of the story of human progress. Whether the motive which is most dominant in the life of a people be trade as in Phœnicia, political control as in Rome, individual freedom of thought and action as at Plymouth, the methods which are adopted by each people in working out its destiny do not and cannot ignore the controlling power of the industries which maintain and advance their lives. This being the case, it is folly to imagine that one can understand the history of a people without an understanding of the activities upon which it depends for its maintenance. To get any positive value from the study of history, we must discover the fundamental factors that operate in the period, and the relations that these bear to one another. It is because industry is a permanent and a fundamental factor in all historical study that it cannot be ignored. It is because it paves the way to an insight into the other phases of history that it should receive especial emphasis during the elementary-school period.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is a partial statement, and ignores the reasons which are based upon the attitudes of the child and his need of practical activity. It has not seemed best, however, to attempt to crowd into this article all of the points that can be made to reinforce this point of view.